



## *United States Attorney District of New Jersey*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 11, 2011

[www.justice.gov/usao/nj](http://www.justice.gov/usao/nj)

CONTACT: Rebekah Carmichael

Office of Public Affairs

(973) 645-2888

### **BRONX MAN CHARGED IN CONNECTION WITH CONSPIRACY TO SMUGGLE OVER 125 KILOS OF COCAINE INTO THE UNITED STATES**

NEWARK, N.J. – Bronx, N.Y., resident Felix Tineo appeared in federal court today, charged for his alleged involvement in a conspiracy to smuggle cocaine from the Dominican Republic into the United States through Newark Liberty International airport, United States Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Tineo, 33, was arrested January 10, 2011, by special agents of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations and charged with one count of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine. To date, more than 125 kilograms of cocaine have been seized as a result of the investigation into the conspiracy. Tineo appeared this afternoon before United States Magistrate Judge Michael A. Shipp in Newark federal court and was detained.

According to the criminal Complaint unsealed today:

Continental Airlines operates a daily non-stop flight between Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic and Newark Liberty International Airport, where some members of the conspiracy were employed as baggage handlers.

Cocaine was put aboard flights in the Dominican Republic, usually packaged in gym bags with hand-written luggage tags that indicated they had been checked at the departing gate. Once the planes landed in Newark, some of the co-conspirators arranged to remove the cocaine from the airplanes, take it from the airport, and facilitate its distribution in the New Jersey and New York areas. Much of the cocaine was delivered to Tineo, who operated in the Bronx.

Over the course of the investigation, law enforcement officers intercepted numerous communications in support of the conspiracy and effected five separate seizures of significant quantities of cocaine. Five other conspirators – all former Newark airport employees – have been arrested as a result of the investigation. Christopher Robles and Victor Alvarado-Arias were arrested in October 2009 after a shipment of cocaine was seized at the airport; Yunior Lopez, Kerlwin Taveras, and Amaurys Caminero were arrested in September 2010 following the seizure of another shipment. Robles, Alvarado-Arias, Lopez, and Taveras have each pleaded guilty to Informations charging them with conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine, and await sentencing. The case against Caminero remains pending.

The charge against Tineo carries a minimum potential penalty of 10 years in prison and a maximum potential penalty of life in prison and a \$4 million fine.

U.S. Attorney Fishman praised special agents of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Peter T. Edge in Newark, for their work leading the investigation of this case. He also credited agents of the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection, under the direction of Director, Field Operations New York, Robert E. Perez, for their important contributions to the investigation.

The government is represented by Assistant United States Attorney Zach Intrater of the United States Attorney's Office Criminal Division in Newark.

The charges and allegations contained in the Complaints charging Tineo and Caminero are merely accusations, and the defendants are considered innocent unless and until proven guilty.

11-018

###

Defense counsel: Robert Torres, Esq., Bronx, N.Y.